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ABSTRACT

Since 1964, students and instructors at DeKalb Area Technical School have had access to the library services available on the adjacent campus of DeKalb College. In 1986, a study was conducted to determine the extent to which the library needs of vocational technical students at DeKalb Tech were being met by the informal agreement with DeKalb College. Interviews were conducted with DeKalb Tech instructors to determine how often and in what ways the instructors used the college library, the types of library materials and services the instructors require their students to use, and the impact that the establishment of a library at DeKalb Tech would have on instructors' and students' library usage. Study findings, based on responses from 150 of the 163 full and part-time instructors teaching at DeKalb Tech in spring 1986, included the following: (1) 46% of the instructors never used the DeKalb College Central Campus Library; (2) only 27% of the instructors reported using the library one or two times per quarter; (3) 33% of the day instructors and only one evening instructor used the college library for student coursework assignments; and (4) 71% of the instructors felt that a library established on the DeKalb Tech Campus would improve instructional activities. Based on study findings, it was concluded that the college library was not viewed by DeKalb Tech instructors as a viable aid to vocational-technical instruction. To improve these perceptions and increase library use, it was recommended that DeKalb Tech should establish a formal cooperative agreement with DeKalb College for use of the library; that a reading room should be established on the DeKalb Tech campus as a viable annex to the college library; that the technical librarian should take steps to improve DeKalb Tech perceptions of the library; and that DeKalb Tech instructors should be encouraged to consider the value of library services for their instructional activities. A copy of the survey instrument is appended. (RO)

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Instructor Perceptions
of
DeKalb Tech Library Needs

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Abstract

This study sought to determine the library uses and needs of vocational technical students. Since an established collegiate library was located on an adjacent campus and was available for DeKalb Tech students, instructor perceptions of library needs were investigated. A survey utilizied the interview procedure to gain 92% responses.

It was found that DeKalb Tech faculty and students do not use the adjacent campus library to the extent that is expected for a degree-granting postsecondary institution. Despite its proximity, the library is not viewed as a viable aid to vocational-technical instruction. Item responses indicated that DeKalb Tech library uses would increase if a new library were built on the DeKalb Tech campus. However, instructor comments indicated that library usage was influenced more by a lack of instructor and student orientations to library services.

It was recommended that a library agreement be established to support vocational-technical instruction. Also recommended were student orientations and tours of the adjacent campus library, faculty staff devlopment seminars on how to use library sevices, and a reading room library annex on the DeKalb Tech campus. It was concluded that vocational-technical instructors should foster occupational skills which recognize library services as a useful tool for further student growth and development.

Instructor Perceptions
of
DeKalb Tech Library Needs

The purpose of this study was to determine the library needs of DeKalb Area Technical School. Since 1964 DeKalb Tech students and instructors have had library services available on the adjacent campus of DeKalb College without a formal library agreement. This condition was unquestioned until 1986 when DeKalb College became a member of The Georgia Board of Regents University System. That merger stimulated questions about a formal library agreement, about sharing the operating costs for the College Library, and about a separate library for DeKalb Tech. The Learning Resource Committee of DeKalb Tech then requested a study which could aid in making recommendations where necessary. The study focused on the library needs of DeKalb Tech as perceived by instructors who teach on the DeKalb Tech Campus.

State funding for postsecondary vocational-technical school library services has been nominal until recently. When DeKalb Tech became a degree-granting institution via high technology programs, library service requirements for accreditation purposes became more important. Hence, state funding for a technical librarian and library books was provided to DeKalb Tech and five other tech schools in FY 1985-86. However, except for the two residential schools in north and south Georgia, the state's 32 tech schools depend upon local funds for library facilities.

Therefore, wide disparities exist in tech school library services, and only a few tech schools in the state have the proximity of an established collegiate library.

Statement of the Problem

Although a 1982 survey showed that only three to five percent of DeKalb College Central Campus Library student users were from DeKalb Tech (Institutional Self-Study, 1982), the library needs of DeKalb Tech have been questioned. DeKalb Tech instructors, who often influence student usage of library services, have varying persuasions about library services as an aid for their instruction. Despite its proximity, the College Library is generally not viewed as a DeKalb Tech oriented facility. Moreover, some administrators differ in their assessment of the College Library's value to vocational-technical education. This study then, can pinpoint the library needs of DeKalb Tech as perceived by instructors, and thereby provide valuable information for the decision-making process.

Basic Question and Limitations

The basic question of the study was: What are DeKalb Tech's library needs as perceived by instructors who teach on the DeKalb Tech Campus? Specifically, it moved to answer the following:

a. To what extent do DeKalb Tech instructors and their

student assignments utilize the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

b. To what extent would DeKalb Tech library usage increase if a library was established on the DeKalb Tech Campus?

The study was limited to the perceptions of instructors who taught on the DeKalb Tech Campus during the Spring of 1986.

Review of Related Literature

Library user studies in postsecondary education are generally confined to libraries located in collegiate institutions. Verhoeven and Christian (1986) argue that a clear definition of user purposes is a critical factor in anticipating problems and constraints in library user surveys. In respect to that tenet, the Georgia State University (GSU) Library Survey (Prather and Clemons, 1981) specifically defined GSU users. The GSU survey showed that over half of the users were undergraduates who heavily used the library for study purposes, 80 percent of the users visited once or more per week, and the greater distance the users lived from GSU the more they relied upon its library services.

Library opinion surveys are also useful for institutions seeking feedback for improvement of library services. There appears to be increasing user interest in what libraries have to offer at the postsecondary level. It also appears that many surveys asking users for improvement suggestions raise expectations that the institutions often cannot meet (User Studies in

ARL Libraries, 1984). This may account for the paucity of published findings about the specific perspectives, needs, values, and priorities of users at a given institution. It is also recommended that user populations generally should be sampled directly at the location of the library (UBC, 1980).

Methodology

DeKalb Tech instructors were surveyed on the assumption that they most often influence student library usage and more readily perceive the level of instructional activities which require the use of library services. Therefore, the research design and the development of survey techniques focused upon instructor responses.

The Office of Research and Planning designed, validated, and pilot-tested two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was designed for full-time day faculty to be administered by an interview procedure. Members of the Learning Resource Committee attended an interviewer orientation session, they equally divided the list of full-time day faculty, and they conducted the interviews starting May 16, 1986. The second questionnaire was designed for evening adjunct instructors to be administered by distribution through the Evening Program administrators.

On June 1, 1986 a total of 150 questionnaires (92%) were returned from the population of 163 instructors. The day faculty returned 80 completed questionnaires (99%) out of a population of 81 instructors and the evening faculty returned 70 completed ques-

tionnaires (85%) out of a population of 82 instructors.

Results and Discussion

The responses were analyzed for the total faculty, the day faculty, and the evening faculty. The day faculty responses were received from instructors who teach in 37 programs while the evening faculty responses were received from instructors who teach in 48 different course offerings.

The responses showed that 46% of DeKalb Tech instructors never use the DeKalb College Central Campus Library (40% day, 54% evening). Only 27% of the instructors (16% day, 30% evening) reported using the Library 1-2 times per quarter, and only three instructors reported that they used it as much as 1-3 times per week.

The responses showed that only 33% of day the instructors and only one evening instructor use the College Library for student coursework assignments. The responses also indicated that 60% of instructor usage was made by the instructors themselves (50% day, 97% evening).

DeKalb Tech instructors do not generally utilize the College Library for obtaining coursework and teaching materials. Only 3% of the responses showed that instructors obtain as much as 21-40%. Moreover, the overwhelming majority (91% day, 97% evening) reported obtaining a minimum of 0-20% of their coursework and teaching materials from the Library.

The responses showed that in the past year DeKalb Tech instructors recommended the purchase of very few books and journals for the College Library. Only 6% of the instructors recommended the purchase of over 10 items, and the greater number of instructors (73% day, 92% evening) recommended no library purchases in the past year.

The types of library materials and services reported to be required by DeKalb Tech instructors were primarily handbooks for specific factual data and formulas. Technical reports, standards, and specifications ranked second in that assessment.

The responses indicated that 71% of the instructors (86% day, 50% evening) felt that a library established on the DeKalb Tech Campus would improve instructional activities. Also, 77% of the instructors (89% day, 60% evening) indicated that a DeKalb Tech library would increase their library usage. However, the instructors disagreed about increasing student library assignments. Day instructors (81%) reported that they would increase their student library assignments, but evening instructors (58%) reported that they would not increase their student library assignments if a library was established on the DeKalb Tech Campus.

The instructors felt that their students would use a library established on the DeKalb Tech Campus in the following priority:

Purposes	Total Responses	Day Responses	Evening Responses
To study	89	70	19
To scan current journals and new books	78	62	16
For reference book and journal index usage	77	61	16
To borrow or use library materials	66	54	12
To use reserved materials	56	47	9
To read materials in microform	30	26	4
To socialize or to relax	28	23	5
For interlibrary loans	14	12	2
For computer literature search	13	12	1
To use maps	3	2	1
Others	15	8	7

The responses included comments primarily made by the day instructors. Several comments questioned the adequacy of the College Library. The comments generally indicated that the College Library does not contain materials needed for vocational-technical instruction, that it is not conveniently located, and that tech students feel intimidated at that facility. A few instructors even stated that no library services are needed for their programs. Many instructor comments argued that DeKalb Tech library usage would increase if DeKalb Tech had a library on its own campus where students could study and relax between scheduled courses.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based upon the findings of this study, DeKalb Tech does not utilize the DeKalb College Central Campus Library to the extent that is expected for a degree-granting postsecondary institution. Despite its proximity on an adjacent campus just 572 feet from the nearest DeKalb Tech instructional classrooms, and despite its juxtaposition to the College cafeteria which is used by DeKalb College and DeKalb Tech students, the College Library is not viewed by DeKalb Tech instructors as a viable aid to vocational-technical instruction.

It appears that instructor perceptions of library services at DeKalb Tech are influenced by instructor teaching components. For example, DeKalb Tech instructors with a significant teaching component in the cognitive domain appear to have greater value for the College Library services than instructors with a significant teaching component in the psycho-motor domain. As technological advancements continue in all occupations, increased demands for cognitive skills may alter that condition in every DeKalb Tech program.

Based upon item analysis, DeKalb Tech library usage would increase if a library were established on the DeKalb Tech Campus. However, instructor comments infer that the location of the Library is not as important as instructor perceptions of a library partnership that includes DeKalb Tech. The findings therefore suggest that one of the reasons the College Library is not fully

utilized by DeKalb Tech instructors and students is because the instructors do not perceive that DeKalb Tech's needs are considered at that facility.

The following recommendations are hereby generated from these findings:

1. DeKalb Tech should establish a cooperative agreement with DeKalb College for usage of the Central Campus Library which will fully support all vocational-technical programs and their instructional activities.

2. A reading room should be established on the DeKalb Tech Campus as a viable annex to the DeKalb College Library. The reading room should be supervised by the technical librarian, it should be staffed and operated by student assistants, and it should serve as a place to study for all DeKalb Tech students. The reading room should house all departmental books, manuals, and publications which can be shared as reference materials by DeKalb Tech instructors and students.

3. The technical librarian should take steps to improve DeKalb Tech perceptions of the College Library. The technical librarian should (a) conduct a student tour of the College Library during student orientations, (b) conduct staff development seminars on how to use library services, (c) offer to make classroom presentations where program activities can be improved with innovative library services, (d) encourage instructors to recommend the purchase of books and journals that meet their program needs,

and (e) consistently demonstrate how the College Library can facilitate vocational-technical instruction.

4. DeKalb Tech instructors should be encouraged to consider the value of library services for their instructional activities. Students pursuing credentials in a postsecondary vocational-technical institution need not only the application of "what is", but also a perspective and directions towards "what else might be." Instructors therefore should foster occupational skills which are a springboard for further growth and development, which are a harbinger for new knowledge, and which recognize library services as a useful tool for greater advancement.

The establishment of DeKalb Tech as a sole institution and DeKalb College as a member of the Georgia Board of Regents University System presents an opportunity not possible in past years. This can be seen in concurrent events such as: (1) the priority to build a new and improved Central Campus Library within the next three years, (2) the presence of a technical librarian who can represent DeKalb Tech's needs and interests as a full member of the DeKalb College Library staff, and (3) the establishment of a library agreement which recognizes DeKalb Tech as a paying partner in the operation of the College Library. These factors can serve to change negative perceptions about the value of library services, and can provide conditions which will improve DeKalb Tech's Program of Studies.

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THE DeKALB TECH SURVEY FOR DAY PROGRAM LIBRARY USAGE

This Survey is being conducted to determine the library needs of DeKalb Tech full-time day programs. Full-time instructors are asked to make that assessment by responding to this questionnaire. The instructor's name will not be identified in this study.

It is requested that each DeKalb Tech instructor provide a response to the items listed below as they are presented by the interviewer.

1. Please indicate your assigned program: _____

2. How frequently do you use the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

( ) A. Daily
( ) B. 4-6 times a week
( ) C. 1-3 times a week
( ) D. 1-2 times a month
( ) E. Once per quarter
( ) F. Never

3. How do you use the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

( ) A. Use the library yourself
( ) B. Send someone to the library
( ) C. Coursework assignments for students

4. How much coursework/teaching materials do you generally obtain from the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

( ) A. 0-20%
( ) B. 21-40%
( ) C. 41-60%
( ) D. 61-80%
( ) E. 81-100%

5. How many books or journals have you recommended that the DeKalb College Central Campus Library buy in the last year?

( ) A. 0
( ) B. 1-3
( ) C. 4-6
( ) D. 7-10
( ) E. over 10

6. Please indicate the types of library materials and services you require students to use:

( ) A. Handbooks for specific factual data, formulas, etc.
( ) B. Technical reports, standards, specifications, etc.
( ) C. Computerized literature search services
( ) D. Indexes/abstracts to locate journal articles
( ) E. Encyclopedias and similar sources for background data
( ) F. None
( ) G. Other (specify) _____

7. Would a library established on the DeKalb Tech Campus improve your instructional activities?

(____) A. Yes
(____) B. No

8. Would a DeKalb Tech Campus library increase your library usage?

(____) A. Yes
(____) B. No

9. Would a DeKalb Tech Campus library increase the library assignments you make for your students?

(____) A. Yes
(____) B. No

10. Please indicate the purposes for which your students would use a library located on the DeKalb Tech Campus:

(____) A. To scan current journals and new books
(____) B. To use reserve materials
(____) C. To use reference books or indexes to journal literature
(____) D. To read materials in microform
(____) E. To use maps
(____) F. For computerized literature search
(____) G. For interlibrary loans
(____) H. To borrow or use library materials
(____) I. To study
(____) J. To socialize or to relax
(____) K. Other (specify) _____

11. Additional Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

THE DeKALB TECH SURVEY FOR EVENING PROGRAM LIBRARY USAGE

This Survey is being conducted to determine the library needs of the DeKalb Tech Evening Program. Evening instructors are asked to make that assessment by completing this questionnaire. The instructor's name will not be identified in this study.

In the spaces provided below, please place a checkmark (___) to indicate your responses for the course(s) you teach on the DeKalb Tech Campus. Please return the completed questionnaire to Nancy Gaskill, the Secretary of the Evening Programs, by May 30, 1986.

1. Please indicate the course(s) you teach at DeKalb Tech:

_____ _____

_____ _____

2. How frequently do you use the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

(____) A. Daily
(____) B. 4-6 times a week
(____) C. 1-3 times a week
(____) D. 1-2 times a month
(____) E. Once per quarter
(____) F. Never

3. How do you use the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

(____) A. Use the library yourself
(____) B. Send someone to the library
(____) C. Coursework assignments for students

4. How much coursework/teaching materials do you generally obtain from the DeKalb College Central Campus Library?

(____) A. 0-20%
(____) B. 21-40%
(____) C. 41-60%
(____) D. 61-80%
(____) E. 81-100%

5. How many books or journals have you recommended that the DeKalb College Central Campus Library buy in the last year?

(____) A. 0
(____) B. 1-3
(____) C. 4-6
(____) D. 7-10
(____) E. over 10

(over)

6. Please indicate the types of library materials and services you require students to use:

(_____) A. Handbooks for specific factual data, formulas, etc.
(_____) B. Technical reports, standards, specifications, etc.
(_____) C. Computerized literature search services
(_____) D. Indexes/abstracts to locate journal articles
(_____) E. Encyclopedias and similar sources for background data
(_____) F. None
(_____) G. Other (specify)_____

7. Would a library established on the DeKalb Tech Campus improve your instructional activities?

(____) A. Yes
(____) B. No

8. Would a DeKalb Tech Campus library increase your library usage?

(____) A. Yes
(____) B. No

9. Would a DeKalb Tech Campus library increase the library assignments you make for your students?

(_____) A. Yes
(_____) B. No

10. Please indicate the purposes for which your students would use a library located on the DeKalb Tech Campus:

(_____) A. To scan current journals and new books
(_____) B. To use reserve materials
(_____) C. To use reference books or indexes to journal literature
(_____) D. To read materials in microform
(_____) E. To use maps
(_____) F. For computerized literature search
(_____) G. For interlibrary loans
(_____) H. To borrow or use library materials
(_____) I. To study
(_____) J. To socialize or to relax
(_____) K. Other (specify) _____

11. Additional Comments:

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